MEMBER : The President has a discretion to extend the time.

DEWAN : Are you prepared to accept that proposition or not ?

MEMBER : Yes, I must accept it for the present, and I must take some other means to alter the rule.

DEWAN : I call you to order. Mr. Harihara Aiyar Anantasubrahmanya Aiyar, before I proceed to deal with your representation, I should like to have information on two points. I understand you live six miles away from the Paddy Farm. May I ask you how often you have visited it ?

MEMBER : I have visited it.

DEWAN : Another point is—you spoke about the Cattle Farm. Have you started an experimental farm yourself ?

MEMBER : It was not a cattle farm that I started, but it was a dairy farm.

DEWAN : Is it still in existence ?

MEMBER : No.

DEWAN : Was it a success ?

MEMBER : No.

DEWAN : As regards the rest of your representation, or rather what purports to be a representation—it is a diatribe and not a representation—I neither subscribe to your wholesale condemnation of the department nor am I prepared to indulge in an orgy of abolitions in the department such as you propose.

49. Agricultural Department.

MR. NAINAN EIPE (*Member, Kottayam taluk, Group I*) said that paddy, the staple article of food in the State, was being imported in large quantities every year in spite of the efforts of the Government to increase its production in the State itself. It was with that object that the Kodayar Irrigation works were constructed at a cost of nearly one crore of rupees ; but nothing had been done to improve the condition of the *punja* ryots in Kuttanad. There was no organisation to represent the cause of the *punja* ryots. There were several works, such as the putting up of bunds, which had to be done by the ryots jointly ; and as a result of failure to carry them out promptly and at the proper time, some fields had to lie fallow. That was a source of hardship to the ryots. The Irrigation Regulation was not sufficient to enforce the carrying out of the works at the proper time. In view to remedy the above defects, agricultural boards should be constituted in Kuttanad as in Nanjinad. Although a meeting of the *punja* ryots was held at Alleppey in furtherance of that object, nothing further had been done.

The leasing of the right of collection of lime-shells was another source of hardship and loss to the ryots. The Government got only a nominal revenue from this source and public opinion was unanimously against the continuance of the lease. The Economic Development Board and the Legislative Council had also passed resolutions to the effect that the lease should be terminated. Lime-shells were necessary for the ryots for manuring their paddy fields and cocoanut gardens. In the circumstances, the practice of leasing the right of collecting lime-shells should be immediately stopped and all ryots allowed to collect lime-shells free of any payment.

The condition of the ryots in Travancore was very deplorable. They were becoming gradually involved in debt. The prosperity of the State depended upon the development of agriculture. But the Agricultural Department was not doing any substantial work conducive to the development of agriculture.. Although there were several co-operative societies in the State, they were not of much real benefit to the agriculturists. They should afford facilities to the ryots for obtaining long-term loans at low rates of interest.

In conclusion, he advocated the appointment of an Agricultural Commission on the lines of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in British India to investigate into, and give constructive suggestions for the improvement of, the economic condition of agriculturists in the State.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Ninan Eipe, the first point that you dealt with was the question of the creation of an agricultural board to advise the *punja* cultivators. It is a difficult matter. The committee that was convened to consider the matter did not think it advisable to levy a cess of more than one chackram per acre. The local officers considered that inadequate—as a matter of fact it is wholly inadequate ; the cess would be very high if a committee is to be appointed. Therefore, the Government were reluctantly compelled to abandon the idea of a committee.

Then you dealt with the question of lime-shell collection. You may know that, as a result of a resolution in the Legislative Council, the Government accepted the views of the Council that the contract system should be abolished and that everybody should have access to collect shells lying in the back-waters or in the sea free of charge.

The Agricultural Commission that you require is a very big matter ; and besides, we have to wait and see the results of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in British India.

50. Agricultural Department.

MR. SADASIVAN PILLAI SIVARAMALINGAM PILLAI (*Member, Agastisvaram taluk*) said that, agriculture being the main occupation of the people of Nanjinad, it was the duty of the Government to see that all possible facilities were afforded for developing it. Sufficient quantities of leaf and other manures and water were not available for all the ryots, and there were no lands for growing leaf manure or for grazing the cattle. On account of restrictions, grazing within the reserves could not also be resorted to. Failure of crops had been caused several times by scarcity of water or by floods. One of the reasons was that many of the old irrigation tanks had been sold in auction and the few tanks that remained as *porambokes* were not maintained properly. There were thus not enough tanks for the collection of rain water. No more tank-beds in Nanjinad should therefore be sold in auction.

Although the Government had passed rules for the grant of agricultural loans it was not easy for all to get loans at the proper time for the purchase of manure seeds, etc. Instructions should, therefore, be issued to the Land Revenue Commissioner for the prompt disbursement of loans. The member suggested also that the grant of loans might be entrusted to the Agricultural Department.

The area under paddy cultivation was increasing year by year and the need for manure was also proportionately increasing. The poor ryots were not able to purchase imported manure. Arrangements should therefore be made for the conservation of local manure such as fish, bones and *punnac*. There were not adequate facilities for the ryots for purchasing manure from manure depôts and agents. It would be advantageous if arrangements were made for the sale of manure both on credit and for cash through co-operative societies.

The major and minor irrigation tanks were in disrepair and should be restored in order to avoid, on the one hand, floods during rainy weather and on the other, scarcity of water during the summer season. A fixed allotment for the restoration of tanks should be provided every year and the further sale of tank-beds stopped. It would also be advisable to appoint a committee for tank restoration work as in British India.

The existing bridge near the Putrakulam sluice at the 13th mile of the N. P. channel was too small to allow the free passage of water underneath during the rainy season. Consequently, breaches occurred near it and the surrounding places were inundated during the past two years. To prevent such damage in future, a new bridge resting on larger arches should be built. The member was aware that estimates for the work had already been prepared, and requested that it might be carried out without delay.

The Champakulam scheme on the Krishnanputtur *kal* should be taken in hand and completed early. That scheme would benefit an extent of about 2,000 acres of wet and about 8,000 acres of garden lands and would, moreover, bring in an additional revenue of about Rs. 15,000 every year.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly